

## **IV, A. Summary of Storm Water Education**

### **Chloride**

Education and outreach efforts this past fiscal year continued to focus primarily on self-regenerating water softeners and the chloride that these systems add to the Santa Clara River. This issue is of great importance to the City of Santa Clarita not only in terms of the health of the river, but of an economic need as well. The City has been working with the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts on the public education and outreach effort concerning the chloride issue. Targeted specifically towards owners of self-regenerating water softeners within the Santa Clarita Valley, the educational efforts focused on encouraging current owners of these systems to stop using their salt-based system altogether. A ballot measure, Measure S, was placed on the November 4, 2008 election. This measure asked the voters of the Santa Clarita Valley to vote whether or not to make the ownership of these water softeners illegal in order to minimize costs at the wastewater treatment plants. The voters voted for the measure which also included the extension of the rebate program for these water softeners to extend to June 30, 2009. The rebate offer from January 1, 2009 through June 30, 2009 was 75% of the fair-market value for these softeners. As of July 1, 2009, it is illegal to own a salt-based water softener connected to the sewer system within the Santa Clarita Valley. With this program, 6,574 self-regenerating water softeners have been removed or are scheduled to be removed from local residences. Efforts have been made to persuade local retailers to remove water softener salt from their shelves to further encourage residents from using the salt based water softeners.

### **Used Motor Oil**

The City of Santa Clarita utilizes the State's Used Motor Oil Block Grant for promoting and supporting programs that educate residents about the proper disposal of used motor oil and filters. Over the past fiscal year, Block Grant funds have been used to promote the City's 17 Used Oil Certified Centers in the City's newsletter, The Signal newspaper, Seasons magazine and on the local radio station KHTS 1220 A.M. The advertising was to high-light the Used Oil Program and included information about preventing stormwater pollution and dumping into the trash and encouraging do-it-yourselfers to take their used oil to recycling centers. The City has contracted with Curbside Inc. to offer free oil and filter door-to-door pickups to residents. Collectively, Santa Clarita's programs offer an effective approach to educating residents with the do's and don'ts of used motor oil recycling.

### **School Visits**

City staff participated in the Rio Vista Environmental Career Day for the National Hispanic Environment Council. Coloring books for kids with environmental themes and different activities they can do to promote good environmental practices were handed out. A total of eight classrooms of first through sixth graders listened and interacted with presentations by City staff about protecting the Santa Clarita River. Staff utilized the Enviroscape model to emphasize that actions like littering, excessive pesticide

application, not picking up after pets and washing grass clippings into the gutter actually affects our rivers and oceans. Safe, non-toxic substances are used (such as Kool-Aid mix, cocoa mix, crushed pepper, etc) as examples of pollutants like pesticides, fertilizer and trash and a spray bottle is used to show that, when it rains, this all runs off into our rivers and into the ocean. The children really understand and make the connection between these actions and the overall result of stormwater pollution.

### **River Rally**

Outreach material promoting our River Rally event was released via the local radio station KHTS 1220 A.M., The Signal newspaper, the Daily News newspaper, "Seasons" magazine and the City of Santa Clarita's website. There are many environmental organizations with booths at River Rally promoting overall environmental stewardship. Over a thousand volunteers every year help remove trash from the river bed and also receive information on a variety of storm water related issues. These issues include proper household hazardous waste disposal, proper disposal of used motor oil, preventing storm water pollution, and river stewardship. Over 1,400 volunteers attended last year's River Rally, and this event is getting more popular every year.

### **Arbor Day/Earth Day event**

This year, the annual Arbor Day event was combined with Earth Day in order to have a large celebration for the community. City staff manned the Environmental Services booth and was available to answer questions, distribute informational brochures. Environmentally themed giveaways were also made available at the event which was free and open to the public. Storm water information is available over the counter at City Hall. Information is also available on our web-site ([www.santa-clarita.com/environment](http://www.santa-clarita.com/environment) and [www.greensantaclarita.com](http://www.greensantaclarita.com)). Local periodicals such as "Magazine of Santa Clarita," "Seasons" and "Santa Clarita Valley Living Magazine" also ran storm water themed advertisements and articles. Staff had many one on one discussions with residents at this event regarding these topics. Environmental Services staff prides themselves with always taking the time with each person to explain various water quality and storm water issues related to their concerns.

### **Business Waste**

The City continued its Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Program (CESQG, often referred to as a "squeegee") to assist businesses that generate small amounts of hazardous materials. The materials include motor oil and filters, florescent light tubes, batteries, paint and other chemicals. Many small businesses are faced with high costs to dispose of the chemicals they generate in a lawful, environmentally friendly manner. By having the City's Door-To-Door Household Hazardous Waste contractor provide this service, the City has negotiated a reasonable rate for the collection of these materials. The cost of this program is paid for by the business that requests the service with the exception of businesses that generate used oil and filters which is covered by the State's Used Motor Oil Block Grant funding through the California Integrated Waste Management Board.

### **Safe & Secure Collection Event**

This year, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and City of Santa Clarita teamed up to host a Safe and Secure collection event at the College of the Canyons. The purpose was to give Santa Clarita residents an opportunity to drop off personal documents for shredding, electronic waste for recycling, and medications for destruction free of charge. The event also served as a means to educate residents about the importance of getting rid of documents and computer parts that could put them at risk for identity theft. The importance of disposing of old medications properly was also stressed so as to not get into the hands of children or flushed down the toilet to pollute our local waterways. Over 33 large cartons of old medication were collected and were destroyed through the Sheriff's Central Property unit.

### **IC/ID Inspectors**

The City's IC/ID inspectors have distributed educational brochures for specific illicit discharge events (i.e. cement, automotive, carpet cleaning, paint, landscape, etc.) in an effort to further enhance their enforcement. Environmental Services has also provided a significant number of advertisements and anti-dumping messages through used motor oil recycling and household hazardous waste programs.

The City takes our environmental outreach program very seriously and we feel we have an outstanding program geared towards all environmental issues.